We claim:

1. A method of monitoring events in a database comprising the steps of:

storing in the database at least one database rule;

mapping temporal constraints of an event of the database rule to corresponding temporal events;

changing the temporal constraints associated with the temporal events based upon temporal constraints for related events of the database rule; and

selectively deploying and selectively removing the temporal events from the database based upon the changed temporal constraints.

- The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of removing from the 2. database temporal events that cannot evaluate as true.
- 3. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of limiting the lifespan of an event to the overlapping period of the lifespan of a parent event.
 - The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of changing the lifespan 4. of an event to omit periods in which the event cannot evaluate as true.
- 5. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of assigning a lifespan of 25 an event having an undefined lifespan as the lifespan of a parent event.
 - 6. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of propagating the lifespan or context of the parent node to all children nodes of the parent node.
 - 7. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a lifespan of an event is expressed as a predetermined duration of time.

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- 8. The method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the lifespan is dependent upon the associated event.
- 9. The method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the lifespan ends at a predetermined time, or recurs at a predetermined period of time.
 - 10. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of combining events using a sequence operator to form a composite event having a time span.
- The method as claimed in claim 7, further comprising the step of associating a lifespan with the sequence operator.
 - 12. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of storing a database rule as an event-condition-action (ECA) rule.
 - 13. A database recorded on a computer storage medium comprising:

software code means for mapping temporal constraints of an event of a database rule to corresponding temporal events;

software code means for changing the temporal constraints associated with the temporal events based upon temporal constraints for related events of the database rule; and

software code means for selectively deploying and selectively removing the temporal events from the database based upon the changed temporal constraints.

14. A computer system that stores a database comprising:

means for mapping temporal constraints of an event of a database rule to corresponding temporal events;

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means for changing the temporal constraints associated with the temporal events based upon temporal constraints for related events of the database rule; and

means for selectively deploying and selectively removing the temporal events from the database based upon the changed temporal constraints.

15. A computer program product comprising:

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software code means for mapping temporal constraints of an event of a database rule to corresponding temporal events;

software code means for changing the temporal constraints associated with the temporal events based upon temporal constraints for related events of the database rule; and

software code means for selectively deploying and selectively removing the temporal events from the database based upon the changed temporal constraints.